

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 MONTEV 02005 260724Z

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

IO-13 EUR-12 /077 W

-----260751Z 050692 /16

R 241355Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3905

INFO USINFO WASHDC

HQ USSOUTHCOM SCJ2

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

UNCLAS MONTEVIDEO 2005

USINFO FOR IOP/M, ILA

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, UY

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ADDRESSES THE NATION

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT MENDEZ MADE A TWO-HOUR SPEECH MAY 21 GENERALLY REITERATING PREVIOUS GOU POLITICAL POLICY. MAJOR POINTS IN SPEECH WERE: (1) AN ENTIRELY NEW, SIMPLER, AND FLEXIBLE CONSTITUTION WILL BE WRITTEN, (2) ONLY TRADITIONAL, NON-COMMUNIST PARTIES WILL BE LEGAL, (3) ELECTIONS WILL NOT BE HELD PRIOR TO THE END OF HIS MANDATE (1981), (4) THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM WILL BE REFORMED, (5) HE WILL NOT REMAIN IN OFFICE BEYOND HIS PRESENT MANDATE AND GENERAL OFFICERS WILL RETIRE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ESTABLISHED MILITARY LAW. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER A WEEK OF ANTICIPATION, DR. APARICIO MENDEZ'

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 MONTEV 02005 260724Z

MUCH HERALDED " PRESS CONFERENCE," HELD IN THE INTERIOR CITY OF PAYSANDU ON MAY 21, TURNED OUT TO BE A TWO-HOUR-LONG LECTURE ON THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF URUGUAY AND OTHER SOUTHERN CONE NATIONS AND A REITERATION OF THE BASIC POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE PRESENT URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT. DELIVERED IN A CLEAR IF NOT CONCISE MANNER, THE FORMER LAW-PROFESSOR-TURNED-PRESIDENT MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE

CURRENT REGIME INTENDS TO CONTINUE TO STRESS THE SECURITY OF THE NATION AND IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SPHERES TO THE EXCLUSION, FOR THE TIME BEING, OF PARTISAN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

3. PRIOR TO THE SPEECH, CONTRADICTORY RUMORS HAD CIRCULATED AS TO WHETHER THE PRESIDENT WOULD ADDRESS THE ISSUES OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM, POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITY AND ELECTIONS. MENDEZ DID ADDRESS THESE THEMES, BUT LARGELY FROM THE STAND-POINT OF HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND REITERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S OFT-STATED POLICY THAT IN THE NEAR TERM THERE WILL BE NO PARTISAN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES ALLOWED IN URUGUAY.

4. MAJOR POINTS OF INTEREST WERE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM. RATHER THAN ONCE AGAIN REFORM THE CONSTITUTION, A NEW POLITICAL CHARTER WILL BE DEVELOPED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND SUBMITTED TO THE PEOPLE FOR RATIFICATION. NO TIMETABLE WAS GIVEN, ALTHOUGH HE NOTED THAT THE ADOPTION OF INSTITUTIONAL ACTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE USED AS A BASIS FOR THE NEW CONSTITUTION IN THE INTERIM. MENDEZ PERSONALLY EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE NEW CONSTITUTION WILL BE SIMPLE AND FLEXIBLE. HE NOTED THAT THE U.S. CONSTITUTION HAS ENDURED FOR ALMOST 200 YEARS WITH RELATIVELY FEW AMENDMENTS AND THAT GREAT BRITAIN DOES NOT HAVE A WRITTEN CONSTITUTION. HE ADDED THAT OVER THE COURSE OF TIME THE NEW CONSTITUTION CAN BE AMENDED, WITHOUT DISRUPTIONS, THROUGH FUNDAMENTAL, SPECIAL OR REGULAR LAWS.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 MONTEV 02005 260724Z

(B) POLITICAL PARTIES: THE ADMINISTRATION WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE "TRADITIONAL" (NATIONAL (BLANCO) AND C IADO) PARTIES, BUT THEIR FUTURE ACTIVITIES WILL BE REGULATED. "INTERNATIONAL" PARTIES (SUCH AS THE COMMUNISTS) WILL BE BANNED AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE PARTIES ON THE ACTUAL CONDUCT OF BUSINESS OF THE ELECTED LEADERS WILL BE MINIMIZED.

(C) ELECTIONS: ELECTIONS WILL NOT BE HELD PRIOR TO THE END OF HIS MANDATE (1981). BEFORE ELECTIONS ARE HELD, REFORMS WILL HAVE BEEN INSTITUTED. THE REFORM PROCESS WILL INCLUDE A CAREFUL REVIEW OF THE TRADITIONAL SYSTEM OF DIRECT SUFFRAGE AND OF THE COMPLEX ELECTORAL PROCESS INVOLVING PARTIES, FACTIONS, SUBFACTIONS AND COALITIONS.

(D) THE CURRENT REGIME: MENDEZ EMPHASIZED THAT THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION IS, (1) CIVILIAN-MILITARY, (2) A TEAM EFFORT, AND (3) LEGITIMATE AND NOT A DICTATORSHIP.

THE PRESIDENT STATED THAT AT THE END OF HIS TERM OF OFFICE, OR EARLIER IF HIS "EQUALS" ASK, HE WILL LEAVE HIS POSITION AS WILL THE GENERALS WHEN THEIR LEGAL TOURS OF DUTY ARE UP. (NOTE: THE LATTER REMARK REFERRED TO PERSISTENT RUMORS THAT SOME GENERAL GRADE OFFICERS WOULD EITHER BE RELUCTANT TO RETIRE OR TO BE TRANSFERRED THIS YEAR. SO FAR THIS HAS NOT HAPPENED AND THIS LATEST ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD PUT TO REST FURTHER SPECULATION ALONG THOSE LINES.) MENDEZ NOTED THAT ONE OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ACTS OF THE GOVERNMENT DISENFRANCHISES THE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES, AN ACT, HE SAID, THAT DEMONSTRATES THE MILITARY'S GOOD INTENTIONS.

5. COMMENT: THE GOU PRESS OFFICE PLAYED UP THE SPEECH WELL AHEAD OF TIME, EVEN GOING TO THE POINT OF INVITING FOREIGN PRESS REPRESENTATIVES TO THE EVENT. THE GOVERNOR OF PAYSANDU ALSO INVITED DIPLOMATIC CHIEFS OF MISSION TO THE AFFAIR -- BUT THEY WERE IN EFFECT DIS-INVITED BY PHONE
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 MONTEV 02005 260724Z

CALLS FROM THE FONOFF ON MAY 19 ON THE GROUNDS OF NON-AVAILABILITY OF HOTEL SPACE. DESPITE THE BUILD-UP, THE PRESIDENT SAID VIRTUALLY NOTHING WHICH HAD NOT BEEN STATED MANY TIMES BEFORE BY HIM, HIS PREDECESSORS, AND/OR OTHER HIGH OFFICIALS.
HAAHR

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, CONSTITUTION, ELECTION REFORM, SPEECHES, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 24-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MONTEV02005
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770188-0171
Format: TEL
From: MONTEVIDEO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770524/aaaaauln.tel
Line Count: 144
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 41bb568b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2392271
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT ADDRESSES THE NATION
TAGS: PINT, UY, (MENDEX MANFREDINI, APARICIO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/41bb568b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009